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SUBJECT: CHINESE ACADEMY OF MILITARY SCIENCES DESCRIBES
MILITARY STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT TO CODEL SKELTON

1. (SBU) PLA General Zheng Shenxia told CODEL Skelton that transparency in strategic intent and expanded military-to-military exchanges enhance our bilateral relations and contribute to the stability of the Taiwan Strait. General Zheng, Director of the Academy of Military Science, discussed the Academy's role in formulation and execution of China's strategic military doctrine. The Academy chooses its research staff from among the PLA's combat units as well as military research institutes and headquarters. AMS has begun using modeling and simulation support for doctrine development and looks forward to working with the United States in developing antiterrorism strategies. "Active Defense," which includes the principles of having no military alliances and no troops posted overseas, continues to be the backbone of China's strategy. Active Defense strategy includes "proactive measures" to ensure Taiwan does not become independent. End Summary.

2. (U) A delegation led by House Armed Services Committee Chairman Ike Skelton (D-MO) and including Representatives Randy Forbes (R-VA), John Spratt (R-SC), Robin Hayes (R-NC), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH), Delegate Madeleine Bordallo (D-GU) and Rear Admiral Mark Ferguson, met with GEN Zheng Shenxia, Director of the Academy of Military Science (AMS), at the Academy August 27.

ROLE OF THE AMS

3. (SBU) GEN Zheng said the National Defense University's purpose is to integrate new strategic and operational theories into PLA doctrine and training. The AMS, in contrast, is a research institute which studies military theory and proposes innovations. It is the center of military studies for the PLA and works directly for the Central Military Commission (CMC). The Academy has four departments and one institution: 1) Department of War Theory and Strategic Studies; 2) Department of Operational Theory and Doctrine; 3) Department of Military Force Building Studies; 4) Department of World Military Studies; and the Institute for Military Operations Research and Military Analysis. The Academy has 350 full-time researchers from various services and branches as well as military institutes, headquarters and other institutions. The Academy conducts research in accordance with the missions designated by the CMC as well as other major issues of interest, and then presents these reports to the CMC for possible inclusion in PLA doctrine. The Academy is an advisory body whose Department heads are chosen from among combat units as well as PLA educational institutions.

4. (SBU) GEN Zheng underscored the rarity of true strategic thinkers and admitted there is great demand from the CMC and PLA for military theories. "We have made great efforts, but still there are many gaps." He agreed that it is difficult to find thinkers capable in both operational and strategic theory that can keep pace with the developments in military

affairs.

REDUCING THE POSSIBILITY OF MISUNDERSTANDING

15. (SBU) GEN Zheng said he has discussed strategy development and implementation with numerous U.S. Department of Defense officials and academics. The best way to avoid misunderstanding, he stressed, is to have transparent intentions in national strategy. "Our strategy has remained the same for a long time: Do not form military alliances. Do not deploy forces abroad. Do not have an expansionist military strategy." The development of the PLA is solely based on the need to protect China. China is trying to shift its research methods from solely qualitative to quantitative and qualitative research. China conducts simulations which combine operational theories with current conditions. Noting differences in Chinese and U.S. culture, General Zheng said we should base our mil-to-mil exchanges on mutual respect and common interests. Military transparency is enhanced through "mutual political confidence," General Zheng said, noting that new units, such as the Second Artillery, have now been opened to visiting delegations.

TERRORISM AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

16. (SBU) General Zheng said research into the threat of terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction is "just proceeding" at AMS, and although the tactics and techniques of anti-terrorism are not a specialty of the Academy, he hopes the United States and China can discuss the issue and share experiences and methods for preventing proliferation. "Today, time is limited," he said. "Later, I would like to

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make this a topic of discussion."

17. (SBU) Representative Hayes (R-NC) congratulated GEN Zheng on China's impressive economic development and hosting of the 2008 Olympic Games and noted that such success could attract terrorist attacks. General Zheng said that while the CMC has assigned the task of developing a strategic theory of antiterrorism to the Academy, China still does not fully understand the threat.

WHAT IS ACTIVE DEFENSE?

18. (SBU) General Zheng said that Active Defense has been China's strategy for a long time and that "Passive Defense" is inadequate for certain threats, in particular, the separatist activities of (Taiwan President) Chen Shui-bian. As long as Taiwan does not seek to split from China, then China will not use force. Otherwise, something "more than defense" might be necessary. Zheng avoided Congressman Flake's (R-AZ) direct question regarding the PRC's Taiwan-related redlines.

19. (SBU) Chairman Skelton, acknowledging the importance and success of senior officer exchanges, said it is also important for lieutenants and captains to "make friendships early in their careers, before they have stars on their shoulders." General Zhang agreed with the Chairman and said that China already has an exchange program with the United States Military Academy. He reiterated the PLA's support for continued and expanded officer exchange programs.

110. (U) The delegation cleared this cable.
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